NOTES ON AL QAWA’ID AL ARBA’

Aal Moalim

Author’s Introduction

“I ask Allaah, the Most Generous, Lord of the Great Throne to befriend you in this world and the Hereafter, and to make you blessed wherever you may be.

And (I ask) that He make you from those who when they are given, are thankful; when they are tested, are patient; and when they sin, seek forgiveness (from Allaah). For indeed these three characteristics are the true signs of happiness.”

Commentary:

This treatise gathers four principles connected to Tawheed which the author (1115-1206AH) wanted to rectify.

The special Tawalli of Allah belongs to His slaves who obey Him and abide by the Legislation He revealed to the Prophet encompasses both this world and the Hereafter.

The invocation the author makes for his reader shows the mercy and good he wants for them, and that Allah opens the door to goodness and blessings for them.

However, one must understand the reality which is that to truly attain the Tawalli of Allah, you will be given blessings, tested, and trialled and you will sin. How you react to these three realities will determine if you are truly deserving of the Tawalli of Allah which is the key to happiness.

When you are given → Be thankful
When you are tested → Be patient
When you sin → Seek forgiveness

And the practical application essence of the following two points is the key to happiness:

- Obedience to the Messenger in what they have come with in Legislation
- Belief in what they have come with regarding creed

And the essence of misery is to fall foul of these two points.

Haneefiyyah is the Religion of Abraham

"Know, may Allaah grant you the ability to obey Him, that the Haneefiyyah, the religion of Ibraaheem is that you worship Allaah alone, making the Religion sincere for only Him, as Allaah says[1]:

وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ

"And I did not create the Jinn and mankind except to worship Me."

So, when you come to realize that Allaah created you in order to worship Him, then know that worship is not called worship unless it is accompanied by Tawheed, just as prayer is not called that unless it is accompanied by (ritual) purity. So if Shirk (mixing partners) enters into one's worship, it ruins it, just like impurity when it enters into the (ritual) purity.

So when you come to realize that Shirk – when mixed into one's worship – spoils it, invalidates one's actions, and makes the person who possesses it into one who will reside eternally in the Hellfire, you will know that the most important thing that is binding upon you is to gain knowledge of that, so that perhaps Allaah may absolve you from this trap, which is ascribing partners to Allaah (i.e. Shirk) about which Allaah said[2]:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَغْفِرُ أَن يُشْرَكَ بِهِ وَيَغْفِرُ مَا دُونَ ذَٰلِكَ لِمَن يَشَاءُ

"Verily, Allaah does not forgive that partners be ascribed to Him in worship, but He forgives what is less than that to whom He wills."

This can be achieved by knowing Four Rules that Allaah has mentioned in His Book."

Commentary:

Al Haneefiyyah linguistically refers to the upright path (الطريقة المستقيمة) and it is rooted from the word حنف which means to deviate away from that which is false and to deviate toward that which is true.

Al Haneefiyyah in this context is synonymous with Tawheed and is the religion and path of Abraham.

This is why the author defined Al Haneefiyyah as worshipping Allah alone and making the Religion sincerely for Him.

The purpose of our creation is to single Him out in worship as He said in 51:56.

If that is the case, that the shar'i term 'Ibaadah is not acceptable to Allah except with Tawheed meaning Ikhlaas and singling Him out completely.

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[1] Surah Al Dhaariyaat 51:56
[2] Surah al Nisaa' 4:116

Just like the term Salah, from a legal shar'i perspective, is not labelled Salah except with purification.

And just as how Hadath invalidates a person's Salah if it enters upon it, Shirk invalidates a person's Tawheed if it enters upon it.

Shirk linguistically means المساهمة في شيء بنصيب which is to assign shares of something to partners.

And legally Shirk means إثبات شريك لله في ما هو من خصائصه which is to affirm a partner for Allah in that which is [supposed to be] uniquely attributed to Him.
The effects of Shirk upon a person are disastrous.

- Invalidates a person's actions
- Reside eternally in Hell

To avoid these consequences, it becomes imperative to learn what Shirk is and to learn what Tawheed is in order to avoid any traps the people of Shirk may have laid in your path.

And the author will provide four principles that are based upon the Qur'an that one must be aware of.

The First Principle

"You must know that the disbelievers whom the Messenger of Allaah fought against agreed that Allaah was the Creator and the Administrator. But this (belief) did not cause them to enter into the fold of Islam.

The proof for this is Allaah's saying[3]:

قُلْ مَن يَرْزُقُكُم مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ أَمَّن يَمْلِكُ السَّمْعَ وَالْأَبْصَارَ وَمَن يُخْرِجُ الْحَيَّ مِنَ الْمَيِّتِ وَيُخْرِجُ الْمَيِّتَ مِنَ الْحَيِّ وَمَن يُدَبِّرُ الْأَمْرَ ۚ فَسَيَقُولُونَ اللَّهُ ۚ فَقُلْ أَفَلَا تَتَّقُونَ

"Say: 'Who provides for you from the sky and the earth, or who owns the hearing and the sight? And who brings out the living from the dead and brings out the dead from the living? And who administers the affairs?' They will surely say: 'Allaah.' Say: 'Will you then not be dutiful to Him?'"

Commentary:

[3] Surah Yunus 10:31

Affirming that Allah is the Creator, Administrator, King, Giver of Life, and its Taker is not sufficient to enter into the generic Islam[4] that the Prophets came with nor is it sufficient to enter into the specific Islam[5] that the final Prophet being Muhammad came with.

The evidence is that Quraysh, to whom the Prophet Muhammad was sent, affirmed these things for Allah yet that was not sufficient for the Prophet to consider them Muslims which is why He continued to fight them.

The verse mentions their answer to the Prophet before he even went out to ask them.

This shows us that this was a belief that was firm in their hearts and that they were convinced Allah was the Creator who provides for them from the sky and earth, owns their hearing and their sight and brings out the living from the dead and brings out the dead from the living and administers their affairs.

And it was not something they said to trick the Prophet Muhammad as some foolishly claim.

If the Qur'an claimed that Quraysh believed in something that they did not actually believe, it would have been an excellent opportunity for them to spread say "look at Muhammad's God lying upon us in claiming that we affirm He is the Creator who administers our affairs and provides for us from the sky and earth etc." and end Islam right there.

The Second Principle

"They (i.e. the disbelievers) said: "We did not invoke them nor turn towards them except to seek nearness (to Allah) and (their) intercession. The proof for their seeking nearness (to Allaah) is His saying[6]:

وَالَّذِينَ اتَّخَذُوا مِن دُونِهِ أَوْلِيَاءَ مَا نَعْبُدُهُمْ إِلَّا لِيُقَرِّبُونَا إِلَى اللَّهِ زُلْفَىٰ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَحْكُمُ بَيْنَهُمْ فِي مَا هُمْ فِيهِ يَخْتَلِفُونَ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِي مَنْ هُوَ كَاذِبٌ كَفَّارٌ

"And those who take protectors besides Him (say): 'We don't worship them except to bring us closer to Allaah.' Verily Allaah will judge between them concerning that which they differ in. Verily, Allaah does not guide he who is a liar, a disbeliever."

The proof for their seeking intercession is Allaah's saying[7]:

وَيَعْبُدُونَ مِن دُونِ اللَّهِ مَا لَا يَضُرُّهُمْ وَلَا يَنفَعُهُمْ وَيَقُولُونَ هَٰؤُلَاءِ شُفَعَاؤُنَا عِندَ اللَّهِ

[4] Which is defined as submission to and singling out Allah in Worship at any time and any place
[5] Which is defined as submission to and singling singling out Allah in Worship based on the Legislation revealed onto the Prophet Muhammad
[6] Surah al Zumar 39:3
[7] Surah Yunus 10:18

"And they worship besides Allaah things that harm them not nor benefit them. And they say: 'These are our intercessors besides Allaah.'"

Intercession is of two types: Intercession that is negated and Intercession that is affirmed.

The Negated Intercession is that which is sought from someone other than Allaah in matters that no one has the ability to carry out except Allaah. The proof for this is Allaah's saying[8]:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَنفِقُوا مِمَّا رَزَقْنَاكُم مِّن قَبْلِ أَن يَأْتِيَ يَوْمٌ لَّا بَيْعٌ فِيهِ وَلَا خُلَّةٌ وَلَا شَفَاعَةٌ ۗ وَالْكَافِرُونَ هُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ

"O you who believe! Spend of that which We have provided for you before a Day comes when there will be no bargaining nor friendship nor intercession. And it is the disbelievers who are the wrong-doers."

The Affirmed Intercession is that which is sought from Allaah. The intercessor is one who is granted the honour of being able to intercede (by Allaah), while the one who is interceded for is the one whom Allaah is pleased with his statements and actions. (All of these occur) after Allaah's permission is granted, as Allaah says[9]:

مَن ذَا الَّذِي يَشْفَعُ عِندَهُ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِهِ

"Who is it that will intercede in His presence except with His permission."

Commentary:

Despite Quraysh affirming that Allah was the Creator who provides for them from the sky and earth, owns their hearing and their sight and brings out the living from the dead and brings out the dead from the living and administers their affairs, they continued to worship other than Him.

When asked why they worshipped other than Allah, they replied that we only worship other than Allah for the purpose of seeking their intercession to Allah so that they could get nearer to Him.

From this answer, we see that they knew that Ibaadah consists of uttermost submission and humility and that they needed to direct this to beings that are capable of interceding for them and get them closer and nearer to Allah.

They never believed these beings were creators who provide for them sustenance from the sky or earth, own their hearing and their sight, are capable of bringing the dead to life and take life away from the living.

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[8] Surah al Baqarah 2:254
[9] Surah al Baqarah 2:255

They believed that these beings they directed worship to have a special position with Allah such that they could intercede on their behalf and get them closer to Allah.

However, Allah labelled them Kuffar for directing acts of worship to other than Allah and liars for their excuse because the only way to get nearer to Allah is through Tawheed which is to direct acts of worship to Him alone, not Shirk which is to associate partners with Him in that which should be solely attributed to Allah alone.

The intercession is of two types:

- The affirmed intercession by the Lawgiver
- The negated intercession by the Lawgiver.

The negated intercession is all intercession sought from other than Allah in that which only Allah is capable of granting.

Thus, the negated intercession is of two types:

- A negated intercession that the Arab pagans fell into. This is what we mentioned above in that these distressed pagans would sacrifice animals, invoke, and direct acts of worship with submission and humility to these beings who would hear their worship and invocations to which these beings would then invoke Allah to grant the pagan what he wants. Allah will then accept the invocation of these deities and grant the pagan what he wants and relieve his distress.

  The Prophet waged war on these pagans until they submitted to Tawheed and abandoned this Shirk.

- A negated intercession that the Magians, Philosophers and some Sufis fell into. They believed that when a distressed pagan invokes these beings, their souls will meet. When these souls connect, blessings will emanate from Allah to the soul of the beings invoked and then those blessings will emanate from the soul of this invoked being to the distressed pagan to grant him what he invoked. God is not aware of this emanation and the invoked being is also not aware of this emanation. Only the distressed pagan whose invocation is answered is aware of this[10].

  This is worse than the Shirk of the pagan Arabs

The affirmed intercession is in the presence of Allah and done with His permission and is done by those whom He is pleased with. It is of many types of which the greatest is the intercession of the Prophet Muhammad on the Day of Judgement for his Ummah.

We ask Allah for this intercession.

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[10] See Majmu' Al Fataawa 9/105

The Third Principle

"The Prophet was sent to people that differed from one another in their worship. Among them were those who worshipped the angels. And among them were those who worshipped the prophets and righteous people. And among them were those who worshipped trees and stones. And among them were those who worshipped the sun and the moon. However, the Messenger of Allaah fought against (all of) them and did not differentiate between any of them. The proof for this is Allaah's statement[11]:

وَقَاتِلُوهُمْ حَتَّى لا تَكُونَ فِتْنَةٌ وَيَكُونَ الدِّينُ كُلُّهُ لِلَّه

"And fight against them until there is no more fitnah (trial, i.e. Shirk) and the Religion[12] is all purely for Allaah alone."

The proof of them worshipping the sun and the moon is Allaah's saying[13]:

وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ اللَّيْلُ وَالنَّهَارُ وَالشَّمْسُ وَالْقَمَرُ لا تَسْجُدُوا لِلشَّمْسِ وَلا لِلْقَمَرِ وَاسْجُدُوا لِلَّهِ الَّذِي خَلَقَهُنَّ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ إِيَّاهُ تَعْبُدُونَ

"And among His signs are the night and the day and the sun and the moon. Do not prostrate to the sun or the moon, but rather prostrate to Allaah who created them, if it is truly[14] He whom you worship."

The proof that they worshipped the angels is Allaah's saying[15]:

وَلا يَأْمُرَكُمْ أَنْ تَتَّخِذُوا الْمَلائِكَةَ وَالنَّبِيِّينَ أَرْبَاباً

"And nor did he order you to take the angels and prophets as lords[16] (besides Allaah)."

The proof that they worshipped the prophets is Allaah's saying[17]:

وَإِذْ قَالَ اللَّهُ يَا عِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ أَأَنْتَ قُلْتَ لِلنَّاسِ اتَّخِذُونِي وَأُمِّيَ إِلَهَيْنِ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ قَالَ سُبْحَانَكَ مَا يَكُونُ لِي أَنْ أَقُولَ مَا لَيْسَ لِي بِحَقٍّ إِنْ كُنْتُ قُلْتُهُ فَقَدْ عَلِمْتَهُ تَعْلَمُ مَا فِي نَفْسِي وَلا أَعْلَمُ مَا فِي نَفْسِكَ إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ عَلاَّمُ الْغُيُوبِ

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11 Surah al Anfal 8:39
12 i.e., until they obey and submit to the worship of Allah alone
13 Surah al Fussilat 41:37
14 The Ma'mool إياه is placed ahead of its 'Amil تعبدون to show الحصر to emphasise that 'Ibadah is solely for Allah alone
15 Surah aal Imraan 3:80
16 i.e., آلهة which are deities worshipped besides Allah
17 Surah al Ma'idah 5:116

"And when Allaah will say: 'O 'Eesaa, son of Maryam! Did you tell the people: Take me and my mother as gods besides Allaah?' He will say: 'Glory be to You, it is not for me to say what I have no right to say. Had I said such a thing, You would have surely known it. You know what is in my inner self yet I do not know what is in Your self. Verily, You re the All-Knower of the Unseen.'"

The proof that they worshipped the righteous people is Allaah's saying[18]:

أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ يَبْتَغُونَ إِلَى رَبِّهِمُ الْوَسِيلَةَ أَيُّهُمْ أَقْرَبُ وَيَرْجُونَ رَحْمَتَهُ وَيَخَافُونَ عَذَابَهُ

"Those whom they call unto (besides Allaah), they themselves seek the means of access to their Lord as to which of them will be the nearest (to Him). And they hope for His Mercy and fear His Torment."

The proof that they worshipped trees and stones is Allaah's saying[19]:

أَفَرَأَيْتُمُ اللاَّتَ وَالْعُزَّى وَمَنَاةَ الثَّالِثَةَ الأُخْرَى

"Have you then considered Al-Laat and Al-'Uzzaa, and Manaat, the third other?"

And also the hadeeth of Abu Waaqid Al-Laythee (radyAllaahu 'anhu) who said[20]:

خرجنا مع النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم إلى حنين ونحن حدثاء عهد بكفر، وللمشركين سدرة يعكفون عندها وينوطون بها أسلحتهم يقال لها ذات أنواط. فمررنا بسدرة فقلنا: يا رسول الله اجعل لنا ذات أنواط، كما لهم ذات أنواط

"We went out with Allaah's Messenger to (the Battle of) Hunayn, and we had just recently come out of Kufr (Disbelief). The polytheists used to have a lote-tree, which they would organize by and hang their swords on (seeking blessings from it); it was called Dhaat Anwaat. So we passed by a lote-tree and said: 'O Messenger of Allaah! Make for us a Dhaat Anwaat, just as they have a Dhaat Anwaat?'"

Commentary:

The Prophet Muhammad came to a nation who worshipped many different beings. The people he came to were not a monolith in the sense that they all worshipped the same thing. What joined them all together was the fact they all were committing Shirk and the Prophet did not differentiate them in that sense.

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[18] Surah al Israa 17:57
[19] Surah al Najm 53:19-20
[20] Jami' Al Tirmidhi 2180

Just because the beings some worshipped were righteous does not mean they were committing any less Shirk than those who worshipped non-righteous beings.

Therefore, whenever someone commits Shirk, irrespective of the being they associate with Allah in worship, they are a Mushrik.

The stones and trees that some of them worshipped were representations of originally righteous men who were worshipped after their deaths and their graves turned into places of worship. For example, Al-Laat and Al-Uzza.

The Fourth Principle

"The polytheists in our era are more severe in their (committing of) Shirk than the first polytheists (during the Prophet's time). This was since the first polytheists used to ascribe partners to Allaah at times of ease and worship Him sincerely during times of hardship. However, the polytheists in our era constantly commit Shirk in times of ease as well as in times of hardship. The proof for this is Allaah's statement[21]:

فَإِذَا رَكِبُوا فِي الْفُلْكِ دَعَوُا اللَّهَ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ الدِّينَ فَلَمَّا نَجَّاهُمْ إِلَى الْبَرِّ إِذَا هُمْ يُشْرِكُونَ

"And when they embark on a ship, they invoke Allaah making their Faith purely for Him alone. But when He brings them safely to land, behold they give a share of their worship to others."

Commentary:

There are reasons why the Shirk of the Mushrikeen of the author's era are worse in their Shirk than the early Arabs.

- The Early Arabs were sincere in worship during times of difficulty, worshipping Allah alone whilst the Mushrikeen of the author's time would worship their deities whether or not times were difficult. In fact, during times of difficulty they would seek their deities even more and turn to them more strongly as is attested to by the reality we live in.

- Most of the Early Arabs had no Messenger and no Risaalah until the Prophet Muhammad came whereas the Mushrikeen of the author's time had scholars and the Qur'an with them and have a 1000-year legacy of Islam to draw upon

- The Early Arabs had distortions in Ruboobiyyah and the Shirk in Ruboobiyyah was not widespread among them. Instead, it was Shirk in Ibaadah that was widespread. However, the Mushrikeen of the author's time are Mushrikeen in Ruboobiyyah and Ibaadah. They attribute to their deities' control and Tasarruf of the universe, knowledge of the unseen to them and other things that should be attributed solely to Allah

[21] Surah al Ankabut 29:65

والله الموفق لا إله غيره

وصلى الله على محمد وعلى آله وأصحابه والتابعين لهم بإحسان إلى يوم الدين

تمت بحمد الله